

and our work is trying—don't let us take these things as grievances, overwork and overworry is the cause. We begin to be sorry instead of cross, and one cordial kindly glance or word dispels the cloud.

"A merry heart goes all the way,  
A sad one goes a mile, O."

And the merry heart never goes alone, but carries a cheerful company along with it. May God keep our hearts sweet and merry for others' sake as much as of our own.

I have spoken of influence under two aspects.

I.—The conscious influence we exercise when we believe all things, hope all things, *expect* others to be and do their best, in fact believe in the capacity for good in human nature.

II.—The unconscious influence which flows out from what we are, whether we will or no. We cannot shirk the responsibility of influencing others, but do not let that thought depress us. We are not what we wish, but we, too, are open to influences stronger, purer, more powerful to transform us than any human influence. "Be filled with the Spirit," says the Apostle, and they who are so filled must needs flow forth in healing and comfort and help.

Let us all rejoice that this mighty influence for good which we all possess does not depend on cleverness, or ability, or money, but on *love* and *faith*. It matters much more to our friends what we *are* than what we *do*.

True worth is in being, not seeming. In doing, each day that goes, by some little good—not in the dreaming of great things to do by-and-by. Remember that in every man there are two selves; seek for the higher in your child and help him to overcome the lower. We have each of us the mightiest weapon in the world, which if wielded aright must be an instrument of blessing to our brother men, and that is our *influence*.

Let us resolve to try to look for the best in our children and friends, to give them credit for good motives, in fact to believe in them; and, like the girl in the fairy tale, to let only pearls drop from our lips when we speak. If you are in sympathy with them, if they know it, and see you to be single-minded, honest, and religious, you cannot lose your hold over them. You have all that is needed for success in your life's work. Only you must believe it. Believe in the power of your eye, your smile, your voice, and above all—your heart.

EMELINE STEINTHAL.

## THE HIGH SCHOOL: WHERE IT FALLS SHORT.

THIS paper is intended for those who have left the House of Education several years, and whose enthusiasm for its methods may possibly have waned. It would be childish to shut our eyes to the fact that this can ever happen, for some of the posts are in remote regions, where conferences and even comrades are lacking, and the spirit of a lonely worker is apt to die within her. The routine of a private schoolroom grows dull sometimes; the children seem stupid; the methods a failure; and a discouraging voice whispers at the close of a tiring day, "You learnt more at your High School in one day than these children in a week, even though their governess has had two years' special training!" By the light of this suggestion much of the work seems suddenly trivial: the Natural History lesson for example, which bears so little resemblance to Oliver's Botany, and the like (indispensable for a South Kensington examination), that one would hardly believe it professed to teach the same things; or the twenty minutes' Scripture, without a note book, where the Bible narrative is studied instead of someone's remarks thereon; or the Geography, which has created an impression but taught so very few facts; and last, but not least, the language lesson! But here imagination must mercifully fail, for what Ambleside student dare compare her results, namely, half-a-dozen commonplace spoken sentences, with the neatly-written irregular verb, in all its moods and tenses complete, which the High School girl would have produced? How many times have we not all felt inclined to murmur, "After all the High School is very good; let the girls go there"? Now let me describe the life of a girl of thirteen in one of the nicest of these schools in London at the present time.

Breakfast at 8 a.m. Prayers at school are at 9-15, which means arriving at 9-5, and there is a mile or more to walk. The walk is through the streets, but that cannot be helped. It counts as part of the day's outing (coming back is usually the other part), and the girls are fortunate if they do not have to go the whole way by train. Lessons then, with a break for lunch, till 1-15. That is four hours, and the whole of that time, with the exception of the break, has



been spent in repeating lessons learned at home, or in listening to a teacher and taking notes of what she says. Probably the Arithmetic lesson is the only one in which the pupil has *done* anything herself. By the by, that lesson is, as a rule, admirably given, and in fact all the teaching, *as lecture teaching*, is extremely good. Dinner is at 2 o'clock, but as it is barely possible to leave the school before 1-30 it is rather a scramble to get back in time. I may say in passing that this was a dreadful rush in my own school-days—often there was no time to wash one's hands, and if it were a wet day entailing macintoshes and high boots the sense of hurry was wretched, especially for the slow or nervous girls. After dinner there are two hours of preparation at least, and an hour's practising, besides a short time for tea, to fill up the afternoon. The home lessons usually have to be scrambled through to get them done in time. It is my experience, both as pupil in a High School, and as the home governess of High School girls, that only those who are bright and quick can do the lessons given in the time. The head mistress has met my remonstrances in the nicest possible spirit, always allowing help in preparation and insisting that the lessons must be left rather than the time exceeded; but this meant loss of marks the next day, and it has been quite a serious question whether the vexation of spirit which this entailed did not do more harm than the extra work. There is something very radically wrong in a system where the reward is not worth the cost of the effort to obtain it. Some "old hands" do better with the help of various dodges which experience and necessity have taught them. These will, for instance, leave their Scripture and take their chance of getting a question they know—more than once or twice I have known this result in full marks—whereas some conscientious unfortunate has "missed" several times, though she knew all the others' questions. In every case, however, the lessons are hurried through, some well and some badly, but always in the light of tasks. There is very little scholarliness about it, and one does not feel that much has been gained beyond method, precision, and general smartness. Meanwhile, several important matters have been left unattended to. Except for the short half hour at luncheon there has been no time to speak to the home people; the girl is too tired of books to care to read, or at any rate for reading to do much good, and she has had no play out of doors. Where tennis and hockey are close at hand it is possible to get in a little time for them, but not otherwise.

When can this little machine, the High School girl, think her

own thoughts, write her own letters, paint, play, or in fact amuse herself and others?

Saturday is a whole holiday with, however, an extra hour of preparation, and the two services on Sunday do not leave a wide margin.

It is the great fault of the High School that it checks individual development, both by its methods of teaching and by its ceaseless routine. This is now widely recognised, but the practical remedy should lie in the hands of those who have received a training upon natural and rational lines. The coming race of teachers have it in their power to profit by the mistakes which their predecessors have inevitably made, and though it is a bold and difficult task to stand up in opposition, though it be but partial, to such an array of earnest and learned women as our head mistresses, we may rest assured that the necessity will bring the opportunity.

A rough programme of action would, I think, be:

1. To reduce the numbers in a class from thirty to ten, so that each child may do much more work in the way of answering and asking.
2. To change the method of teaching from the tempting lecture, which sounds as if such an excellent lesson were being given, to that by which the children are encouraged to ask questions and to find out for themselves, and by which every lesson that has not aroused some interest may be considered a failure.
3. To reduce the subjects, by a judicious time-table which runs English grammar into the language lessons, literature into reading, etc., etc., so that there is time for handicrafts and for leisure.
4. By the lessening of the numbers in each class to separate the girls who are *obliged* to pass examinations from those fortunate ones who are exempted.

Under some such *régime* the teacher would have an opportunity of knowing whether her high standard is being grasped by each. It is a fine thing to be certain of this with regard to twenty out of thirty, but I would rather know it of ten out of ten, for we want all our women to be useful, companionable, intelligent and healthy, though only some can be really intellectual. All this and far more we have learnt in the training about which some are still sceptical, but the wisdom of its methods come home to me more than ever as I read the account of the Head Mistresses' Conference, recently



held at Oxford, which is put into my hands as I write these last lines. Space forbids me to quote at any length, but these few words are significant of the times:—

"Mr. A. L. Smith found girls' work 'deficient in reasoning power, neither terse nor concentrated enough in style, wanting in originality, with a tendency to be servile and wooden.'"

"Miss Lees (Tutor, Somerville) added to her paper a suggestion that more leisure should be given to girls in schools, as tending to cultivate their imagination and foster originality."

Last but not least, "Miss Lacey made a bold and revolutionary speech, denouncing all external examinations for girls at school. Mr. Maude followed, and professed himself quite willing to be exterminated. He had for fifteen years seen the results of cramming Clarendon Press Notes and could face the end with complacency."

Do we need further proof? Is not the House of Education at Ambleside more than justified?

F. R.

### "ONWARD!—BUT TOGETHER!"

"How far one feels from all P.N.E.U. here"; "So many letters run down our Magazine!"

I know I am rather audacious to quote for general benefit, and without the writers' sanction, sentences such as these, but I am conscious of having a very definite end in view, so I hope the writers of the above will forgive me; as for the rest—well, I am prepared to run the gauntlet of opinion, for I am convinced that there are times when it is much the best way to say exactly what one means, and to state clearly the origin of one's ideas on a given subject.

Having said this as some sort of apology, I now want to go as thoroughly into matters as space and the forbearance of our long-suffering Editor will allow.

I think my readers will agree with me that, underlying the first of these remarks, there is in the mind of the writer a sense of

isolation *which should not be* if our Association were the power for good among us that it might be. Then, under that second remark, there appears to me a lack of enthusiasm—generous and wholehearted—which again points out that our Association is not all that could be wished. Go one step further and we come to the root of the matter, viz., a lack of internal unity among the members of our Association.

To some of us, the well-being and the sound and steady growth of our Association are matters of earnest thought, and at times, I fear, of some little anxiety; and since, year by year, our band of fellow-students is increasing, I know I am only echoing the thought of some of our most earnest workers when I say that it is an *imperative necessity* that, as our chain grows in length, it should grow also in strength, and that so long as there is this want of consolidation, we can never look for that power which comes from *united effort and united aim*.

Now I believe I am right in saying that most, if not all, of the students who have passed through the House of Education fall into one or other of these three classes:

(a) Those whose very surroundings tend to keep up their enthusiasm, to whom the course is smooth, and for whom but little comes to mar "the even tenor of their way."

(b) Those who are away in lonely out-posts—battling hard with the difficulties of the untoward surroundings—away from P.N.E.U. thought and inspiration, and, as Mrs. Arnold-Forster so well expresses it, in danger of becoming "dreary teachers . . . from being out of touch with any kindred spirit."

(c) Those whose enthusiasm is as a flickering flame, because they are suffering themselves to lose those "*ideals*" which "*are the very of life*" (Westcott).

Now to all my fellow-students (and let me here remark, this term should for each one of us apply to *all* who have worked under, and been trained by, our beloved President) to all such I say that the knowledge of our weakness should be a source of strength. If, as isolated units banded together externally by a common interest in the weal of the P.N.E.U., and by the possession of that single aim which not one of us who is true to her H.O.E. training can dare to lose from sight, we can do much, what may we not effect with God's help and blessing, if we draw closer together, letting the links of our Association be no imaginary ones, but so welded together by a sense of fellowship, mutual interest and mutual help,